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Organizational Committee
Second session

Summary record of the first part* of the 7th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 19 June 2008 at 4 p.m.

Chairperson: Mr. Takasu ..... (Japan)

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Adoption of the agenda

Adoption of the draft report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its second session

* The summary record of the second part of the meeting, to be reconvened on Monday, 23 June 2008, appears as document PBC/2/OC/SR.7/Add.1.

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08-39717 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 4.50 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda (PBC/2/OC/12)

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

Adoption of the draft report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its second session (PBC/2/OC/L.2)

2. **The Chairperson** said that, on the basis of prior consultations with the Committee members, he would suspend the meeting and reconvene it on Monday, 23 June 2008.

The meeting was suspended at 4.55 p.m.

United Nations PBC/2/OC/SR.7/Add.1

General Assembly
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12 August 2008

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Organizational Committee
Second session

Summary record of the second part* of the 7th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 23 June 2008, at 3 p.m.

Chairperson: Mr. Takasu ..... (Japan)

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Adoption of the draft report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its second session

Closure of the second session of the Peacebuilding Commission

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08-45258 (E)

The meeting was reconvened at 3.15 p.m.

Adoption of the draft report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its second session (PBC/2/OC/L.2)

1. **The Chairperson** drew the Committee's attention to an informal paper that had already been circulated to all members, containing revisions to the draft report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its second session (PBC/2/OC/L.2). In the interest of time he did not intend to read out all of the revisions.

2. *The report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its second session, as revised in line with the informal paper distributed to the Committee members, was adopted.*

Remarks by the Secretary-General

3. **The Secretary-General** said that he was honoured to join the Committee as it marked another milestone in the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, which represented an important step towards the much-needed coherence he was seeking to ensure across the United Nations system, bridging critical gaps in the global response to post-conflict situations and promoting a truly integrated approach entailing simultaneous advances on the economic, political and security fronts. What counted was not one single actor holding the key, but how all the actors were brought together at the crucial time. That had been the rationale behind the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission, and all involved must reaffirm their commitment to ensuring the success of that critical international experiment.

4. He was convinced that one of the reasons that Africa was not on track to meet the Millennium Development Goals was the insufficient emphasis placed on post-conflict peace consolidation. If success in peacebuilding was to be achieved, a wide range of situations would need to be addressed. He fully supported the Committee's efforts to streamline its methodologies with a view to accommodating a larger number of countries on its agenda. In line with that approach, he recognized the need for a United Nations system-wide culture of coordination and coherence to ensure that all the peacebuilding operational actors — in the political, security, development and human rights areas — could come together in support of the integrated approaches that were being developed. The Peacebuilding Support Office was well situated as a neutral party under the direct supervision of his office to serve as a hinge between the Commission and the operational players, thereby contributing to the Commission's efforts to bring tangible and timely results to the countries under its consideration.

5. It would be necessary to invest generously in critical national capacities to ensure that peace was sustainable, since viable States required local institutions capable of delivering basic services and providing security, justice and political stability. He looked to the Peacebuilding Commission to generate good practices which could be applied not only in the countries on its agenda but across the board. There was also an urgent need to generate predictable and sustainable funding for recovery and peacebuilding. The Peacebuilding Fund had provided catalytic support, but more substantial funding would be required. He planned to call for a review of the Fund's terms of reference, once he had received the independent evaluation report currently being prepared by the Office of Internal Oversight Services. The Fund must be enabled to achieve maximum impact and value added in countries where peacebuilding support was most needed; he looked forward to receiving suggestions from the Peacebuilding Commission in that regard. It was also his intention to initiate a process to identify conceptual and operational gaps in the international community's immediate response to post-conflict situations, with a view to providing concrete recommendations to all relevant United Nations organs. In that process, he would draw on the Peacebuilding Commission for advice.

6. He expressed his profound appreciation to the outgoing Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, whose commitment to the work of the Peacebuilding Support Office had been outstanding. Finally, he congratulated all those present and assured them of his personal commitment, and that of the entire United Nations system, to the work of the Peacebuilding Commission.

7. **The Chairperson** expressed appreciation to the Vice-Chairpersons of the Committee and to the Chairpersons of the country-specific configurations and the Working Group on Lessons Learned. He also commended the outgoing Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support and her team.

8. In his own work as Chairperson, he had sought to establish the strongest possible relationships between

the Commission and the principal organs of the United Nations, building close ties with the President of the General Assembly, the President of the Security Council, the President of the Economic and Social Council and the Secretary-General, all of whose cooperation he greatly appreciated.

9. Offering some reflections on key strategic issues that might improve the Commission's future work, he noted that from the useful retreat that had been held in January, the two strategy and policy discussions, and various high-level presentations, he had come to recognize the importance of fostering constructive interdependence among peacekeeping, peacebuilding and socio-economic development in the overall peace continuum in countries emerging from conflict. How, then, could more effective and structured efforts be made to strengthen and solidify peace in post-conflict situations? How could the best use be made of the Peacebuilding Commission's convening and advocacy role? Those overarching questions had led him to develop an indicative checklist for peacebuilding operations, expressed as nine critical questions.

10. The first question was whether peacebuilding efforts were trying to apply the same template to many different cases, rather than taking into account the unique context of each conflict. The second was whether firm national ownership of peacebuilding was fully present, respected and supported.

11. Third, for ensuring a smooth handover from peacekeeping, were the linkages among security, development, human rights and the rule of law correctly prioritized and sequenced? Fourth, for purposes of consolidating peace, were effective efforts being made to advance in constructive political processes? Durable peace depended on the existence of a viable political framework. Fifth, for capable and accountable nation-building, was an appropriate mix of support provided to ensure effective checks and balances in government affairs and promote institutional capacity-building and reform?

12. Sixth, for ensuring a seamless transition to recovery and economic development, was a tangible peace dividend speedily delivered to the people? Seventh, for orchestrating national and international efforts to promote a smooth transition to good governance, were coordinated and integrated approaches properly planned, bringing all relevant actors together under effective leadership? Eighth, was the political will demonstrated to take a longer-term view in favour of sustainable engagement?

13. The ninth and last question was one that those involved in peacebuilding had to ask themselves: were they personally committed to respond to the call of countries that required international attention and support? In the case of the Peacebuilding Commission, he was sure that the last answer was "Yes," and he thanked all the members for their commitment and support.

14. **Ms. McAskie** (Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support) said that it had been a privilege for her to be associated with the wonderful and timely experiment of the Peacebuilding Commission. Having worked first in development, then in humanitarian response and then in peacekeeping, she had always been convinced that there was something missing. When she had worked in development, she had worried that the emphasis on rewarding performance was leaving out too many countries struggling to deal with serious obstacles. When she had dealt with humanitarian issues, she had believed that the most important form of humanitarian response was to resolve the conflict. And when she had worked in peacekeeping she had questioned how the need for economic stimulation could be addressed at a time of post-conflict stabilization. In peacebuilding, innovative efforts were being made to bring all of those elements together, although more work needed to be done to gain acceptance for the idea that economic, humanitarian and human rights solutions were just as important, and must be found at the same time, as political and security solutions. Further efforts were needed to ensure that the building blocks of peace were well defined and delivered early on, even during a crisis, and certainly during the negotiation and stabilization stages.

15. It had been clear from the start that Member States had wanted the Peacebuilding Commission to be a substantive mechanism that delivered on its mandate, and the Commission's accomplishments thus far showed that it was meeting that challenge. The Peacebuilding Commission was a unique partnership that provided a means of finding solutions to the so-called North-South debate, by showing that development efforts and peace and security went hand in hand, and by helping those countries that would otherwise be the forgotten crises; finding a new mechanism for predictable funding for countries

recovering from conflict; and bringing the security, political, development, humanitarian and human rights agendas together in the cause of lasting peace.

16. While it was the duty of Secretariat staff, under the leadership of the Secretary-General, to recognize the Commission's accomplishments and ensure that they were supported, it should be borne in mind that support for the work of the Commission in particular and for peacebuilding in general would require the provision of real professional resources.

17. **Mr. Løvald** (Norway) said that as Norway relinquished the Chair of the Burundi configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, he was hopeful about the future because Burundians were determined to put the past behind them and move ahead. They knew that that difficult task would require the political maturity to think of the public good first and short-term personal gains second. As the Burundians tackled the job in Burundi, the rest of the international community had to stand by their side and deliver on its promise to help deal with the post-conflict situation in a holistic manner.

18. It might well be that after a period of consolidation a United Nations Peacebuilding Council would emerge. Accordingly, the current peacebuilding architecture should be maintained. The Peacebuilding Support Office should continue to be an independent office under the direct authority of the Secretary-General and should not be subordinate to departmental interests, so that it would remain consistent with the underlying philosophy of peacebuilding as determined at the 2005 World Summit.

19. **Mr. Ney** (Germany) observed that the report on the Commission's second session showed clearly that the Monitoring and Tracking Mechanism was of tremendous significance for adequately reviewing the implementation of the Integrated Peacebuilding Strategy both in Burundi and in Sierra Leone. Benchmarks and indicators were also important for reviewing implementation. Noting that the report stressed that the strategy should be well balanced, prioritized and sequenced, he cautioned that further peacebuilding priorities should be added to an existing strategy only after very careful consideration and on a case-by-case basis. He stressed, too, the importance of coherence and coordination of donors' and agencies' activities within the peacebuilding process. Mirroring that coordination on the ground remained of utmost importance for the efficient implementation of country strategies.

20. Germany especially welcomed the debate on further strengthening the cooperation between the Peacebuilding Commission and international financial institutions, regional development banks and regional and subregional organizations. With regard to efforts to streamline peacebuilding work within the United Nations system, Germany underlined the significance of regular interaction between the Peacebuilding Commission and the principal organs of the United Nations, and was grateful to the Chairperson for his efforts in that regard. Finally, Germany hoped that the current debate on the distribution of seats within the Organizational Committee would soon be satisfactorily resolved.

21. **Ms. Viotti** (Brazil) said that the report suggested a very promising future for the Peacebuilding Commission. All efforts should continue to be made to adapt the strategic framework to the specific circumstances of each country. As Brazil pursued its work as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration, it sought to follow the example of the Chairpersons of the Burundi and Sierra Leone configurations, who had done excellent pioneering work in those countries. As acknowledged in the report, the two-track approach devised for Guinea-Bissau illustrated the Commission's ability to evolve and adapt to the needs of the countries on its agenda.

22. As a new body, the Peacebuilding Commission was learning by doing. The lessons learned pointed to the need to strengthen coordination among United Nations bodies, to work closely with the international financial institutions and to allow for a stronger United Nations presence on the ground. In that way, the Peacebuilding Commission would create the necessary synergies and generate momentum for enhanced and coordinated action in post-conflict situations.

23. **Mr. Wolfe** (Jamaica) also welcomed the adoption of the report. He stressed that the Commission should continue to focus on development and should place greater emphasis on the areas of education and training, rural and agricultural development and infrastructure improvement, private-sector reform and development with an emphasis on job creation. Jamaica also looked forward to the continuation of dialogue within the Peacebuilding Commission as it built on the notable successes it had achieved thus far.

24. He, too, hoped that the issue of allocation of seats would be settled in short order. For small countries such as Jamaica, which were seldom members of the Security Council or the Economic and Social Council, the opportunity to be elected from the General Assembly category was of critical importance. As part of a long-term solution, consideration should be given to increasing the number of seats from the General Assembly category, as there tended to be an imbalance between those seats and the allocations from the other categories.

25. He wished that over the past two years more use could have been made of Organizational Committee meetings, which regrettably had been reduced to little more than rubber-stamping sessions and had been less frequent than his delegation would have wished. While it might be argued that more Organizational Committee meetings could detract from the work of the country-specific configurations, he felt sure that more creative use could be made of the Organizational Committee.

26. **Mr. Ruddyard** (Indonesia) noted that the recommendations in the report set out important steps that would need to be explored further by the Commission and solidified in cooperation with international and national stakeholders, and also in coordination with the relevant United Nations entities. Indonesia was grateful to all members of the Peacebuilding Commission for their active participation in and support of the task force on the private sector, of which Indonesia had served as facilitator. It hoped that the task force's observations and recommendations would be disseminated to the relevant entities both within and outside the United Nations system, since they would begin to be of real value once they reached the pertinent stakeholders.

27. Although Indonesia was leaving the Peacebuilding Commission, it hoped that the Commission would continue to enhance its central role in the international peacebuilding architecture. For that to happen, a truly integrated approach would be needed, in which the issues of peace, security and socio-economic development were addressed simultaneously.

28. **Ms. Gallardo Hernández** (El Salvador), Vice-Chairperson, recalled that her country had had its own experience of the process of peacebuilding. She had contributed that experience to the work of the Commission, but had also learned much in return. Through that interplay and exchange of ideas, the mandate of the Commission had been strengthened. Through their shared work over the last two years, the Commission members had established a shared view of what peacebuilding meant. Now the task was to apply the lessons learned in an integrated manner to the specific realities of the countries on the Commission's agenda. El Salvador was pleased to have chaired the Working Group on Lessons Learned, and hoped that the report of its work would be useful to the Commission in its important task of alleviating the suffering of populations emerging from conflict and seeking to live peacefully and productively together.

29. **Mr. Cabral** (Guinea-Bissau) welcomed the fact that the Peacebuilding Commission was examining the situation in his own country. As the report just adopted clearly illustrated, when the Commission turned its attention to a country, it did so with a determination to have a direct and positive impact on the situation prevailing there. He concluded by echoing the call for an innovative solution to the issue of allocation of seats on the Organizational Committee.

30. **Mr. Dolgov** (Russian Federation) said that the report appropriately reflected the large amount of work done by the Peacebuilding Commission. There had been difficulties in the initial stages, particularly in the political discussions on the relationship between the Commission and the principal organs of the United Nations, and on the exact nature of the Commission's task. But as the report showed, those early difficulties had been successfully overcome and the Commission had become what it had been intended to be: the hub of United Nations peacebuilding efforts. Such a hub was necessary to coordinate the actions of the large number of players involved in peacebuilding.

31. The Commission had established good working relationships with the Governments of the States on its agenda. That was very important because the principle of national ownership continued to be a key element in peacebuilding. The productive relations which the Commission had established with the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council were also important. As the issues on the Commission's agenda were also on the Security Council's agenda, the Council had a clearer picture of the contribution being made by the Commission. While such cooperation needed to be a two-way street, the Commission's input certainly was very important for the work of the Security Council, particularly since

certain States were likely to be removed from the Council's agenda.

32. **Ms. Zarra** (Italy) observed that Italy had gladly embraced the challenge of participating in the Organizational Committee since its inception. The Committee had learned and achieved a great deal, as described in the report. Italy was leaving the Peacebuilding Commission but would continue to participate in the country-specific configurations for Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau in order to contribute to the stabilization of those two countries.

33. **Mr. Hoscheit** (Luxembourg) said that the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission had been one of the great successes of the 2005 World Summit, of which all concerned could feel legitimately proud. The Commission should pursue its process of reflection on concepts and methodologies because, to paraphrase the poet Antonio Machado: "there is no path; you must make the path as you walk". There was a need to retain a capacity for self-evaluation and reflection in order to ascertain whether the methodologies selected were suited to the major challenges facing the Commission. In that connection he stressed the value of the Commission's January 2008 retreat, where there had been a very fruitful exchange of ideas, and of the quite remarkable work of the Working Group on Lessons Learned, which had culminated in a very substantial and important report.

34. It was important to ensure the integrity of the peacebuilding architecture for the future and to consider the way in which it fitted into the United Nations system. At the same time, networking of the Commission beyond the United Nations system, with the Bretton Woods institutions, regional and subregional organizations, civil society and academia, was also critical.

35. **Mr. Komárek** (Czech Republic) said that the second year of the Peacebuilding Commission's existence had been very successful. The growing visibility of the Commission's work attested to its increasing role among the United Nations organs.

36. It had been a privilege for his country to participate in the Commission's work since its inception and to have had a part in many important decisions that would influence its work in the future. The Czech Republic's term of membership was coming to a close, but it would continue to follow the work of the Commission closely and to develop its bilateral cooperation with the countries on the Commission's agenda.

37. **Mr. El Shinawy** (Egypt) observed that, as a new organ, the Peacebuilding Commission should focus on lessons learned over the past two years so that its performance could be further enhanced, for the benefit of the countries on its agenda. He suggested a number of guidelines which his delegation believed should be followed.

38. The first was the need to continue to emphasize national ownership at all stages, in terms of both defining priorities and determining how they should be implemented. That principle was the key to success and would induce other countries to have their names put on the agenda of the Commission. Second, links should be developed between the Commission and the principal organs of the United Nations, as well as international financial institutions and regional organizations, particularly the African Union. At the same time, the Commission must always take the lead in drawing up recommendations regarding United Nations activities in the peacebuilding area in general.

39. Third, Egypt encouraged the two-track approach, involving quick-impact projects defined by the Governments of the countries concerned. It also believed that the Commission should continue to conduct field visits, which helped members to learn more about current circumstances and to take account of the views of the Governments concerned.

40. Fourth, he stressed the importance of taking an active part in the review of the terms of reference of the Peacebuilding Fund to ensure that it could respond appropriately to the countries' needs in terms of peacebuilding priorities, which in turn would promote a sense of national ownership.

41. Finally, very serious thought should be given to the current problem regarding the seats allocated to the various groupings and to ways to ensure that the current situation did not recur. The presence of the various groupings should be a source of strength to the Peacebuilding Commission.

42. **Mr. Harvey** (United Kingdom) said that it was useful to reflect on the work done by the Peacebuilding Commission over the last year. There was a need to remain alert to new broad challenges, such as rising food and fuel prices. In particular, he wished to highlight four specific challenges.

43. First, the Peacebuilding Commission must translate the strategic frameworks into action on the ground. That meant living up to the commitments made, including those on mobilizing resources. In the biannual reviews of the work in Burundi and Sierra Leone, it had been noted that the Peacebuilding Commission should be more self-critical of the impact of its actions, including, for example, quantifying what additional resources had actually been mobilized.

44. Second, there was a need to ensure that the Peacebuilding Commission's engagement was matched to the realities on the ground and was both effective and efficient. A number of questions arose in that connection: was sufficient investment being made in analytical and monitoring work to identify changing peacebuilding needs and resource gaps? Were the United Nations system and partners providing the Peacebuilding Support Office with the inputs needed to that end? Was the Peacebuilding Commission focusing its engagement only on key peacebuilding priorities in order to maximize its impact? Should it have fewer, more strategic, meetings in New York, with most of the day-to-day work being undertaken in-country? At the same time, was the Commission minimizing the burden on national capacity as much as it should? Did the United Nations have the right level of capacity on the ground and were the missions adequately integrated?

45. Third, the Peacebuilding Commission needed to continue to involve all stakeholders, including Governments, civil society, political parties and religious leaders, to ensure the success and sustainability of peacebuilding efforts. Success was also more likely if steps were taken, in close cooperation with the international financial institutions and regional development banks, to prevent uncoordinated donor programmes that pulled Governments in several directions at once.

46. Finally, there was a need to consider whether the new peacebuilding architecture was filling the gaps it had been set up to fill. Some of the critical gaps were the need for stronger leadership to bring national partners and the international community together behind a common strategy; the need for civilian expertise to be deployed more rapidly to build national capacity; and the need for faster, more flexible funding.

47. **Mr. Christian** (Ghana), Vice-Chairperson, said that, based on the foundation laid in the past two years, his delegation was optimistic that the Peacebuilding Commission would very soon be able to provide meaningful solutions to the many problems facing the countries on its agenda, thereby contributing to the achievement of sustainable peace. His delegation would continue to take a keen interest in the work of the Commission and to participate in its country-specific meetings.

48. **Mr. Antonio** (Angola) said that peacebuilding was an exercise that had to be inclusive, both at the national level and as far as international partners were concerned. The Peacebuilding Commission had learned many lessons and made many innovations. It had undertaken new exercises such as the task force led by Indonesia on the role of the private sector, whose work would come to fruition in the next session as it became clear how those actors could contribute.

Closure of the second session of the Peacebuilding Commission

49. **The Chairperson** declared the second session of the Peacebuilding Commission closed.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.